

HIKING

FOREST SERVICE

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

NATIONAL FOREST – San Juan
RANGER DISTRICT - Columbine
Date: February 2003



SALT CREEK TRAIL #559

Length: 6.0 miles (9.6 km.)

Recommended Season

Use: Light

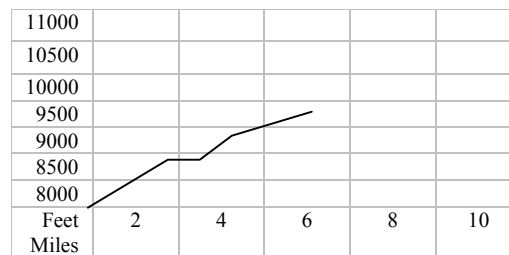
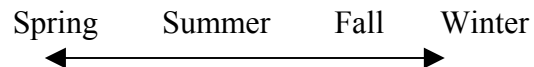
Difficulty: Most difficult

USGS Map (s): Elk Cr./Orphan Butte

Starting Elevation: 10,800'
Highline (Co. Trail)

Ending Elevation: 8,200'
Junction with Hermosa Creek

Recommended Season: Spring/Summer/Fall



Access # 1: Go 28 miles north of Durango on U.S. 550 to Durango Mountain Resort; turn west and take Hermosa Park Rd. 10.5 miles to the junction with Hotel Draw Rd. Turn west on this road and follow it about 5 miles to the junction with Scotch Creek Rd. Directly after this Y is a gate with the Colorado Trail leading south. There is adequate parking for several vehicles, and 4WD is recommended. Follow the Colorado Trail roughly 6 miles to the Salt Creek Trailhead.

Scan of the San Juan National Forest Map
Forest Service maps and other publications available at the Public
Lands Center in the Durango Tech Center, ½ mile west of Durango
off Highway 160, or by calling (970) 247-4874. www.sjma.org

Access # 2: Access the bottom of this trail from the Hermosa Creek Trail. To reach the trailhead for Salt Creek, the hiker must go about 5 miles down the upper Hermosa Creek Trail. Please refer to the Hermosa Creek Trail description for more information about access points.

Attractions & Considerations : By starting from the Highline, the hiker drops over 2,000 feet and enjoys an all-downhill excursion. The top of the trail was reconstructed in 1989, so the tread is in excellent condition. The trail switchbacks down through meadows and aspen glades. The bottom of the trail is a bit rougher and steeper: watch your step. The trail goes along the creek the last few miles and offers views that seem almost tropical. After crossing the creek, the trail merges with the Hermosa Creek Trail.